

Minutes – Panel “Protecting authors and IP; Protecting labour”

The panel discussion “Protecting authors and IP; Protecting labour” took place on the 25th of February 2015 in the afternoon and lasted about two hours. It included five participants - Peter Jenner (Sincere Management; Visiting Professor at University of Hertfordshire and University of Agder) Ryan Heath (Author and former EU spokesperson for the European Digital Agenda), Bartek Lessaer (Policy analyst, DG Employment, European Commission), Carmela Asero, (Policy Analyst , Policy Directorate of the JRC at the European Commission) and Agnès Parent-Thirion (Senior Program Manager, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions).

The moderator introduced the participants and gave the floor to each of them for about ten minutes in order to address the link between protection, both of authors' rights and IP and of labour rights.

The first intervention was made by Peter Jenner. He explained how non-transparent the processes of the contemporary music industry have become. He raised questions about the money paid to artists that no longer allow many of them to make a decent living and the difficulties to pursue a career as a musician compared to the pre-Internet period. For him, the single market in this industry is not functioning. He claimed the necessity to find a way that money made by music is getting to creators, more concretely through the introduction of voluntary numerical registries, where if registered, users would have a much greater obligation to pay the creators. Thus, creators would have to get their monies due for the use of their copyrights from users themselves.

Ryan Heath took a less pessimistic position than the previous speaker. He highlighted the major global changes leading to problems for the middle-class; however he presented some views of the meritocratic character of the internet. He also talked about the coming copyright reform that will be able to address some of the problems for the creative industries. Finally he argued the need for a skills change and adaptation as a crucial challenge for Europe.

Bartek Lessaer pointed out the ambitious goals of Europe 2020, stressing the broader changes on the labour markets of industrialised countries. He also expressed the opinion that part of the changes are purely technological and policy makers have yet to find appropriate ways of tackling them, i.e. the application of information technologies. In the current period, in particular after the crisis we have observed a rise in temporary and part-time employment. The crisis and the austerity policy have put extra pressure on the welfare systems. Also, liberalising the labour markets, while aiming to raise competitiveness of national economies, has resulted in diminishing collective bargaining power of workers *vis a vis* the employers. Current record high youth unemployment also means that a lot of highly qualified young people cannot make full use of their skills and often resort to menial jobs.

Carmela Asero presented some aspects of the ICT impacts on employment conditions. She also addressed some problems related to the mobility of knowledge workers in Europe, for instance that pensions, health insurance, and other social insurance or services are difficult or impossible to move across European borders.

Agnès Parent-Thirion pointed out the differentiation between employment and work activity and respectively, between quality of employment and quality of job. For her, statistically there is a problem to identify the user with a worker, even if it the activity of UGC complies with the ILO

definition of work. It is still unclear if respondents in surveys will identify this activity as work. An important question is the one about the identity/identities at work. The next point developed concerned the psycho-social risks for the creative industries employees. It is actually a new area of precarisation of workers.

After the interventions, the speakers answered the questions from the audience.

Prepared by Vassil Kirov